

the conversation had been carried on somewhat warmly for a time an elderly lady, the widow of a government official said to the mother: "My dear, the preacher was right; I have been all thro that life and know it thoroughly, and it is true that the friendship of the world is enmity with God." I need not say that testimony from those who had tried both lives, outweighs all adverse criticism from those who know but one. I have had such testimony often. And it is a true testimony. But it is to be greatly feared that very many members of churches cannot, by their experience, give such a testimony for the simple reason that the "love of the Father" is not in them. They are still dominated by the friendship of the world. Their love of the world is still their ruling passion. But the true Christian, governed as he is by the constraining love of the Father can testify to the undeniable fact that the friendship of the world is opposed to the energetic love of God, as illustrated in the steadfast believer's daily life. Whose friendship do you prefer, the world's or God's?

#### FEET WASHING

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(Historical excerpts on "feet-washing" among Christians, from writers who lived during the first three centuries of the present dispensation.)

A thoughtful perusal of the statement of Irenaeus on the subject of feet washing as practiced in his day, (about A. D. 150), will bring before us the subject with a freshness that lovers of the truth will appreciate. "By means of the new man, all who from the *beginning were* (his) *disciples* having been cleansed and washed from things pertaining to death should come to the life of God." "For he who washed the feet of his disciples sanctified the entire body and rendered it clean." The argument of the author is, that Christ did not come for the sake of those of one age only, but for those of all ages. And that the "God life" is particularly shown in this act of great humility, and if for that age also for all ages. This is what he is pleased to call the "God life." If the God life in Christ washed his disciples' feet, the same God life in his disciples will wash each other's feet. Indeed it would seem from the historians of the early ages of Christianity that the feet washing was so commonly distinctive a Christian act that it is never called in question. The many allusions to it which are purely incidental and not in the form of an argument would show it to have been a universal practice among Christians. I will here mention the fact that it appears to have been *distinctively Christian*. I no where find that the washing of the feet of guests was ever the custom of the ancients any more than it is the custom now. In making this statement I am

fully aware that commentators on the holy scriptures have stated that it was a custom for servants to wash the feet of guests. And, indeed, among the Romans especially, and possibly rarely among the Greeks, lords and ladies of the most aristocratic and official families did have servants whose special duties were to preside over the baths of their masters, but then only, as is even true in our own age their service was for their own masters and it does not appear that such servants were expected to render such services to guests or strangers. In fact the people of ancient times were not as a rule one whit more courteous or kind to guests and strangers than is the case now among us. Such arguments brought to bear against the ordinance of feet washing in the attempt to explain it away are indeed to far-fetched to be worthy of the attention of the honest enquirer. I do not find any history by contemporaneous writers showing that the washing of the feet of guests by menial servants was at all common among pagans. In fact I know of no history showing it to have been a custom. But granting it to have been a custom our Lord just reversed the idea and makes the lowliest service among men the most exalted in the sight of God. And so may it ever be among his followers.

Paul's letter to Timothy touching the care of widows says, "if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work." I Tim. 5:10, shows very plainly that feet washing was an ordinance in the church at this time, i. e., thirty-two years after the crucifixion of Christ. For if it were but a custom and common among all people why require that she wash "the saints' feet?" For if a custom, such an one would have been in the habit of not washing the saints' feet *only*, but also the feet of strangers as well. If feet washing is only "good works" in general as some would have us believe why should Paul require that she also "have followed every good work" in addition to that of washing of the saints' feet? But why spend time to refute a thing that refutes itself. The facts are that Jesus our Savior commanded his followers to wash feet, and that Paul required the saints to wash feet. Jesus said, "ye *ought to wash* each other's feet." John 13. Dare any one who professes to be a follower of Christ and accept him as Lord and Master say, "ye *ought not to wash* each other's feet? Nay, verily. Would the Apostle Paul demand more of the poor widow than he would demand of me? Irenaeus says, "He (Christ) sanctified the entire body," i. e., by this act of washing the disciples' feet. How a man professing extraordinary learning and erudition can appeal to the history of the early church to prove the *assumed*

"apostolic succession" and continuation of the "gift of healing" and deliberately take the broad ground that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever," and not see the ordinance of feet washing among the early Christians, looks very much to me like straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. Tertulian says, "I must recognize Christ both as he reclines on a couch and when he presents a basin for the feet of his disciples and when he pours water into it from the ewer and when he is girt about with a linen towel"—"we use along with others these articles." Here is a positive declaration of the practice, i. e., we "*recognize—we use these articles.*" Now, if Christ was recognized among the early Christians by the girded towel, the water and the basin for the disciples' feet, why is he not recognized among us in the same way seeing that he "is the same yesterday, today and forever." I, too, in this nineteenth century recognize my Lord the same way. Now as to the "apostolic succession," I do not find any evidence of the apostolic college of twelve in history. Many were called apostles but they were not limited in number to twelve. It requires entirely too much straining of the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles, when we try to make it appear that the number was preserved at twelve, even while the writers of those epistles were still living. But more on this in a future article. If the testimony of Tertulian is good enough to prove "Divine Healing" as accepted in his time, (Anti-Nicene Fathers Vol. 3, p. 107) it is also equally good proof of the fact of feet washing as an ordinance among Christians in his day. Common honesty on the part of certain so called D. D's, will make them change base, touching feet washing and the Lord's Supper as taught in the New Testament and practiced among the early Christians, all of which I purpose to notice in future articles gleaned from those fruitful fields. I shall, if the Lord permits, present further history for the ordinance of feet washing before taking up the other subjects.

#### Home Circle

##### "AFTER YOUR BOY"

Temperance Banner.

One of the delegates to a State Convention of Christian Endeavorers, a young business man, dressed in a natty rough-and-ready suit, every movement alert and eager and telling of bottled energy within, came suddenly upon a red-faced citizen who evidently had been patronizing the hotel bar. Buttonholing the delegate a trifle unceremoniously, the latter said:

"What are you fellows trying to do down at the meetings? You are hot on